

**MANAGING EDUCATION PROGRAMMES FOR REHABILITATIONS OF BOKO  
HARAM INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS) REFUGEES CAMPS: ISSUES  
AND CHALLENGES IN NORTH-EAST, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract** The spate of insurgences and conflicts in the country and around the sub-region has led to the increased presence of refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in Nigeria. This has resultant challenges on the basic needs of refugees and IDPs at different levels. One of the highest priorities of refugees and IDPs communities is education. Nigeria is obviously struggling to provide basic education for her citizens hence the emergence of refugees and IDPs and their need for education put a double burden on the nation's education system. Forced displacement inevitably leads to a temporary or permanent halt in a child's school career. Education opportunities in situations of displacement are often very limited, and refugees and IDPs face numerous additional barriers to accessing education. In general, internally displaced persons are less likely to access education than their non-migrant peers . However, forced displacement does not universally lead to a reduction in access to education; where families are forced to flee from areas with very few schools to urban areas or organised camps with more schools, displacement can in fact increase access to education. Observations show that, in spite of the challenging situation, there is little evidence of the commitment by the Nigerian government through the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) to the education of refugees and IDPs. In cases where some levels of provisions are available, the quantity and quality of such provisions needs improvements. Since there is no guarantee that refugees problems will end soon, this paper examines the available provisions and institutional approaches for the education of refugees and IDPs in Nigeria; analyses the level of Nigeria's commitments for providing education for refugees and IDPs persons; and some of the challenges. The study found among others that most of the children of Boko Haram internally displaced persons had no inclusion in education programmes, teachers were not provided for education programmes, curriculum was not supported and education policy was not coordinated by Governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), international and donor agencies for rehabilitating Boko Haram internally displaced persons in refugee Camps of North Eastern Nigeria. The study concluded that the four minimum standards of inclusion, teachers, curriculum and education policy for managing education programmes for refugees caps were not provided for rehabilitating boko haram internally displaced persons. Recommendations of the study, among others included that Federal, State and local governments, NGOS, donor and international agencies should make education programmes inclusive for rehabilitating Boko Haram internally displaced persons in refugee camps of North Eastern Nigeria.

**Keywords** Managing Education, Programmes, Rehabilitation, Refugee Education, issues and challenges in Nigeria's

## INTRODUCTION

Education at all levels and in all its forms constitutes a vital tool for addressing virtually all global problems. Education is not only an end in itself. It is a key instrument for bringing about changes in knowledge, values and behaviours and life styles required to achieve sustainability and stability within and among countries (Bajaj and Chiv, 2009).

Education has been seen as the greatest force that can be used to bring about changes. Aminu (2015), observed that the greatest investment a nation can make for the development of its economic, sociological and human resources is that of education. Education according to him provides us with people possessing the necessary knowledge and skills to win a nation's state and to even export brains. This also explains why the Federal Government of Nigeria geared a policy towards attaining national development. According to National Policy on Education (2014).

*Education shall continue to be highly rated in the national development plans because education is the most important instrument for change: any fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society has to be preceded by an education revolution.*

The internally displaced persons of boko haram insurgency are people who have been through heart breaking, sometimes appalling suffering. Yet in camps and settlements, villages and towns all over North Eastern Nigeria, they very often looked to multicultural education as their major or only hope for a decent future. All rehabilitation programmes for cultural diversity of refugees displaced and conflict affected populations as well as disaster victims, are considered education programmes.

Education rehabilitation according to Banks (2008) refers to any form of education or teaching that incorporates the histories, texts, values, beliefs and perspectives of people from different cultural backgrounds. It is education that protects the well being, fosters learning

opportunities and nurtures the overall development (Social, emotional, cognitive and physical) of children affected by conflicts and disasters (Kadiri, 2017). Schooling through education programmes for rehabilitation is the greatest hope for a life that will transcend the poverty that breeds violence which in turn intensifies poverty. An education programmes that allows these people to overcome despair.

Education is the fundamental right of all children in all situations. In a crisis situation like the boko haram insurgency, children are frequently denied this right, they are also denied the opportunity to develop and acquire the skills, knowledge and competence to better cope with the prevailing difficult circumstances and to contribute meaningfully to their other families and communities (Badau, 2012). Educational programme that can cater with cultural and ethnic strength that enriches a society with prejudice. This is the approach used by teachers to effectively promote diversity among internally displaced persons in refugee camps (Anderson & Madigan, 2015). It embraces differences in ethnicity, culture, gender and religion. When teachers and children come from different backgrounds, it can often lead to misunderstandings about behavior and performances in the refugee camp (Robertson & Breiseth, 2008). It is only through education that children can cope with displacement situations. According to Kadiri (2017) children expose to violence, and aggressions need to be educated in basic societal values, to develop a sense of respect towards each other and other populations and banish prejudices in order to live in a mixed community, thus reducing tension. The management of educational programmes in displaced situations can therefore help them to develop positive attitude which are important to confront such situations.

It is also vital to develop educational curriculum that caters for the need of crisis stricken population and to ensure that no social group are excluded or denied the right to education. The management must make gallant efforts to keep education alive during the crises. Classes are sometimes held in the open air, in homes and basements or in damage buildings of various kinds.

Restoration of inclusion to education should be one of the brightest priorities of internally displaced persons as it provides hope for the future. Education can thus be seen as investment in solution to crises as well as being the fourth pillar of humanitarian response alongside nourishment, shelter and health services (Midttun, 2016). Management of education programmes includes developing mutual understanding, collaborative, inter-communal dialogue and social reconstruction between people for educating children in conflict crises and disaster situations (IIEP-UNESCO, 2016).

Kotite (2012) reported that each step of emergency education programmes from sector diagnosis through the monitoring of implement action strategies should identify the core vulnerabilities of the education sector crises. Through this process, the vulnerabilities can be reduced through capacity gap analysis, strategic planning, policy formulation and ensuring that risk reduction indicators are included in monitoring and evaluation frameworks. Badau (2012) finding that although children had access to emergency education, resources were not provided, the curriculum activities were supported and capacity building was not carried out by governments, NGOS, donor and international agencies in emergency education programmes.

Badau (2017) pointed out that applying the principle of managing education under emergency situation is in terms of damages caused to the entire education system. The damages are also caused in terms of access, resources, curriculum and coordination of education system emphasise the need for identifying core vulnerabilities for effectiveness of interventions provided (see also Badau and Oluweselu, 2015. INEE (2014), UNESCO(2016), UNICEF(2006), IIEP/WORLDBANK,(2013) and Sinclair (2013) grouped the principles of managing education programmes under emergency situations into inclusion, teachers, curriculum, and coordination of education policy. These principle are presented inform of standards that must be met or that can be measured as indicators of success in managing education programmes under emergency situations. The principle is that education

should be “inclusive” while the standard or indicator would be whether inclusiveness can be observed with success in the ongoing multicultural education programmes.

It is clear that educational programmes can be part of the solution to rehabilitating boko haram internally displaced persons and that the absence of such education will be destabilizing locally and may be a threat to the national and state security. The people lives and their education system have been disrupted. The population special needs are education if it is to recover from the trauma and build a better future. This study focused on inclusion, teachers, curriculum and coordination of education policy as thematic areas of educational programmes for rehabilitating boko haram internally displaced persons. It was carried out to determine the extent to which standards of educational programmes were successful in refugee camps of North Eastern Nigeria.

### **Education as an Instrument for Rehabilitations of Boko Haram IDPS**

For those who have practically lost all other assets, education represents a primary survival strategy which forms the basis to build livelihood and reintegration. Education seen as a basic right is enshrined in the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, the 1951 Refugee Convention and the National Policy on Education (NPE; 1977, 1981, 1998 and 2014) as well as the 2000 Universal Basic Education (UBE) Policy in Nigeria.

The sole aim of basic education in Nigeria is to equip individuals with knowledge and skills that will enable them to

- a live meaningful and fulfilling lives;
- b contribute to the development of the society;
- c derive maximum social, economic, and cultural benefits from the society;
- d Discharge their obligations competently (FME,1999.)

It may be implied from the above stance on basic education that the UBE is expected to provide free and compulsory education for all including special groups, refugees.

Refugee education is meant to foster social cohesion, provide access to life-saving information, address psychological needs and offer a stable environment for these persons referred to as refugees. It is to help these rebuild their lives, communities and direct energies towards productive and meaningful lives.

Refugee education requires professionals in all aspects of education relevant to develop the vital learning domains which include basic knowledge, technical or job related skills, positive attitudes, inter-personal relationship and productive consciousness, for personal and communal efficiency.

Education is a vital tool for individual, community, and national development. The objectives of education in countries are directly situated within their overall National Development Plans. These apply to internally displaced persons.

For most refugees and internally displaced persons, education, whether basic literacy or skill based training may help to put life into their seemingly dead situations. The level of preparedness for refugee education is dependent on the economic circumstances of the nation especially as most of the camps hosting the IDPs are managed by a central agency, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). NEMA is directly funded by the Federal Government despite recession. Taking into consideration the fact that there is a generally acknowledged deficit in Nigeria's education infrastructure and its inability to provide most basic requirements for the education sector, the level of preparation for refugee education may suffer greater deficit. A country's level of preparation is expected to meet at least the basic demands of refugee education and show her ability to adequately and proactively deploy resources to meet emergency situations as they arise. The typical response to refugee situations is to focus on

relief materials such as food, clothing and medical supplies. To a large extent, Nigeria has shown preparedness in these areas.

Nigeria has been generously described by some scholars as a developing country. Less generous analysts have, however, referred to the country as an under-developed country. This description undoubtedly derives from its very low level of social and economic infrastructure, which directly impact on the standard of living of the majority of her population.

The submission in this paper is that the level of preparedness for refugee education must be situated against the background of the country's present economic circumstances and her ability to effectively address any form of disasters and emergencies.

A reality of assessment of Nigeria's preparedness is that there is a lot that still needs to be done to bring us to the required level. The President of Nigeria visited one of the IDP camps in the North Eastern geo-political zone towards the end of year 2015. Nigerian newspapers were awash with news about the parlous state of the camp, which is symptomatic of most of such camps. Infrastructure is lacking and the state of the inhabitants of the camps is considered as very poor.

Mass and social media images show the conditions of most refugee camps and the living status of refugees. Even those in developed economies, cannot be said to be fully prepared to cover the social and education needs of refugees.

### **Challenges of Educational Programme for Rehabilitations of IDPS in Nigeria**

The fact is education constitutes the major instrument for rehabilitation and human development and fulcrum around which every other activity revolves (Tahir, 2016) Nation which have recorded tremendous feats in the world heavily relied on the instrumentality of education.



However, in Nigeria there seems to be a daily decline of educational standards. Although according to the former president Olusegun Obasanjo in his Presidential Speech on April, 24, 2000 in Dakar Senegal, he attributed the educational falling standard to bad governance. In his speech; he stated that:

Nigerian educational system as it stands is a living proof of the damages that bad governance can do to our society and social structure.

Human beings are the architects and engineers of progressive change and development and they constitute the most important resource we can have internally.

Tahir (2016), identified a number of daunting challenges which Nigerian education is confronted with. They are as follows:

- e Gender equity in education;
- f Dearth of teachers;
- g Overcrowded classrooms;
- h Inadequate infrastructures;
- i Funding of education.
- i. **Gender Equity in Education:** Gender disparity is a well known feature of Nigerian educational landscape. Educational policies and practices in Nigeria are to say the least gender insensitive and thus not fashioned to achieve gender balance in schools.

### **Gender Equity**

**Table 1.** Nigeria – Regional and Gender Differences in Literacy Rates in 2010.

ZONE	WOMEN	MEN
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South East	65 %	75 %
South West	55 %	80 %
North West	30 %	40 %
North East	25 %	41 %

Source: UNICEF 2010

The table above shows the Nigeria- Regional and Gender differences in literacy rates in 2010. The table also shows that there is a disparity in literacy rates between men and women in some parts of the geo-political zones of Nigeria.

- ii. **Shortage of Teachers:** It is a well known fact that no educational system in a nation can rise above the quality of its teachers. In other words, the success of the system rests on the availability of good and qualified teachers who are internally motivated. Wasagu, (2016) stated that “Teachers are the way to improvement since they are the final brokers when it comes to educational policy”. Former minister of Education, Professor Ruqayyatu, (2010) stated that “lack of Qualified teachers was responsible for the dismal performance of students especially in mathematics and English language”. That poor performance turned out to be a child’s play when NECO released its own SSCE results which showed that only 126,500 of the 1,260,765 candidates, just 10 percent of those who registered for the body’s exams passed five subjects including English and mathematics. The statistics also showed that only about 234,682 out of the 1,260,765 candidates who sat for the exams made five credits in five core subjects the minimum requirements for the university admission in Nigeria. That means only two percent passed the exams with five credits including English and mathematics. Therefore where there are

competent, capable and well motivated personnel among other things, the educational system of a country can surely succeed.

- iv. **Overcrowding:** The introduction of UPE brought with a sudden population explosion in schools and its resultant effects on teacher-pupil or student ratio. Overcrowding in the classroom is now the order of the day from Primary to university level. Because of the overcrowded classrooms, there are usually not enough places for the number of students in class/lecture rooms. This type of atmosphere is not conducive for effective teaching/learning process. Effective teacher/student relationship may not be possible in an overcrowded classroom. This probably explains why teachers in higher institutions of learning resort to the use of handouts (Akande, 2014).
- v. **Inadequate infrastructural facilities:** This refers to the physical and spatial enablers of teaching/ learning. They include classrooms, libraries, laboratories, workshops, play fields, school farms and gardens as well as provision of water and sanitation. These have to be of the appropriate quantity, size and quality to meet the minimum standards for promoting any meaningful teaching and learning condition.
- v. **Funding of Education:** The managers of primary secondary and higher institutions in Nigeria are in consensus that these institutions are grossly underfunded. This menace could be seen in the degree of dilapidation that characterizes the primary and secondary buildings in parts of the country. The non-payment of teachers' salaries and allowances which most times result in strikes. There is lack of necessary teaching and learning material at all levels of the educational system. Finally, the mismanagement and diverting of substantial resources from the educational system to other ends. The underfunding has

been criticized and attributed to several factors ranging from military rule, diversion and mismanagement of funds and lack of focus (Victor, 2012, Dike 2009, Bolag 2012).

### **Condition of Educational System at IDPS in North-East Nigeria**

Refugees and other displaced persons, however, require more than relief. They require support to be able to continue with life and relatively good living. Adult, adolescent and children refugees or internally displaced persons share common characteristics, which include the disruption of their education or business. This has considerable implications on their psyche, which calls for specialists' support. The kind of education proposed for such persons must be functional and not merely academic or basic literacy.

To be able to achieve the major objective of ensuring basic education for refugees and displaced persons, the United Nations in 2010 passed the resolution on the right to education in emergencies. Following this, the Interagency Network on Education in Emergencies (INEE) in collaboration with other committed groups developed these four tools to assist. They are

- ii. INEE and IASC Education Cluster's Module 14 Human Rights and Accountability.
- iii. The INEE Minimum Standards for Education, Preparedness, Response, Recovery.
- vi. The INEE Teaching and Learning Guidance Notes.
- vii. The INEE Reference Guide on External Education Financing.

The major objective is to ensure that refugees have access to basic education. The situation of the refugee is an unusual one caused by decisions and actions to which he is not a party. Much as the situation is external to the refugee some form of coercion is also exerted over him or her and the pain the refugee feels can only be assuaged through appropriate psycho-social and educational measures.

At the individual level, refugee education can focus on productive activities, which may be in the informal sector. In as much as a future without wars and natural disasters is desirable, it may be far-fetched. Refugee situations will necessarily be disrupted hence efforts must be deliberately made to ameliorate the impact of disruptions and restore the psycho-social balance

of the refugees and displaced persons. It is necessary that efforts be directed at formal education for children and non-formal for adults.

Refugee education can be treated as an emergency where there are military conflicts to include refugees, soldiers and fighters. It can be structured to cover all parties involved. Soldiers and fighters can be taught to respect the rights of refugees and displaced persons.

Educators involved with refugees can devise means of providing temporary classrooms and improvise to meet peculiar needs of refugees. They may be able to support the refugees psychologically and create a feeling of hope for the future after the current emergency.

The overall objective of refugee education is to improve their living standard and socio-economic circumstances. We must be always reminded that the situation of the refugee is an unusual one caused by decisions and actions which they may not be party to. Refugee education may not be limited to just formal education but an attempt to impart knowledge in all areas of life which will enable the refugee develop skills for independence.

Action plan for refugee education is akin to preparation for natural disasters like hurricanes or mudslides because they may occur without warnings and their impacts inform human and social crises. Observations show that politically motivated instability, ethnic and religious uprising build up with time and explode with consequent social crises, in some cases, refugee issues. The case of Boko Haram and the resultant IDPs situation in Nigeria buttress this perspective. Action plan may therefore consider many aspects of the structural and institutional

capacity of the country. Further considerations may be given to the psychological status and geographical location of the refugees and camps. It may not be out of place to commit to

1. Training of citizens for multi-tasks in all circumstances
2. Participation of faith-based and philosophical organizations in citizenship education
3. Planned logistics for stewards and use of regional resources
4. Regionalization of emergency relief organizations for prompt intervention
5. Partnership with international relief organizations in peace time
6. Regionalization of emergency relief materials for easy distribution
7. Occasional drills and monitoring of social trends in politics, economy and social relationships.

## **Conclusions**

Nigeria being the largest country in Africa is naturally a major player in the affairs of the continent. Nigeria has served as a place of refuge for person's fleeing armed conflicts and economic and political problems across the continent. In the mid and late 1970s, the country actively provided refuge for citizens of Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe fighting for political independence.

Though Nigeria has provided relief and support in times of crises and emergencies, yet the majority of refugees do not receive basic education. Literature reveals that of the approximately 20 million refugees under the care of the UNCHR, half are children below 18years; only 50% of the children are enrolled in primary education; 25% in secondary education and 1% have access to tertiary education. These figures include those from Nigerian where accurate data estimations are not available. This situation requires concerted efforts of

governmental and non-governmental bodies. Preparations should include but not limited to the following:

### **Recommendations**

1. Since resources and supplies are limited, provisions of vocational and entrepreneurial training for employment to meet personal and family sustenance requirement are to be intensified.
2. Often the class sizes are large with learners who are of varying educational backgrounds, language skills and ages. Teachers are to be supported and trained to meet the challenges of teaching in refugee communities.
3. Teachers and other professionals are likely to be among the refugees or IDPs. Identify teachers in the population who may organize educational and recreational activities and support informal educational groups organized by refugees and displaced persons themselves.
4. The Federal, State, Local Governments, NGOS, donor and international agencies should make educational programmes inclusive for rehabilitating boko haram internally displaced persons in refugee camps for continuity and hope for the future.
5. Teachers should be provided for educational programmes by federal, State, and local governments, NGOs, international and donor agencies for rehabilitating boko haram internally displaced persons in refugee camps of North Eastern Nigeria.
6. Curriculum for educational for rehabilitating boko haram internally displaced persons in refugee camps should be supported by Federal and State Ministries of

Education, National and State Emergency Management Agencies, Donor and International Agencies.

7. The coordination of educational policy for rehabilitating boko haram internally displaced persons in refugee camps should be diversified to include all ethnic groups in the camps.

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